



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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SNP Memo #07-08-12

To: Directors, Supervisors, and Contact Persons
School Nutrition Programs

From: Lynne A. Fellin, Acting Director
School Nutrition Programs 

Date: October 11, 2007

SUBJECT: Operation of School Nutrition Programs during a Pandemic

As a result of activities being taken to plan a federal government-wide response to a potential outbreak of pandemic disease, USDA has received questions regarding the operation of school nutrition programs during such an event. The information below is excerpted from a USDA memo on the subject.

The School Nutrition Programs are designed to support institutional feeding operations. The authorizing statutes assume that programs will operate in a congregate setting in schools. During the outbreak of pandemic disease, public health officials anticipate the need for “social distancing” as a means of minimizing the spread of illness by limiting person-to-person contact. Thus, when social distancing measures are in effect, schools and other facilities may be closed, and operation of the School Nutrition Programs will likely not be possible.

School facilities and equipment normally used in the operation of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or the School Breakfast Program (SBP) may be used for other activities during a pandemic outbreak. In a Presidentially-declared disaster, USDA commodities and other foods would be available for distribution to community groups or public agencies. Although school facilities or commodities could be used, their use would not be related to the NSLP or SBP.

Depending on the nature and scope of the outbreak, USDA may waive some Program requirements in areas adjacent to, but not directly affected by, a pandemic outbreak. Provisions relating to operational procedures, review requirements, or meal patterns have been waived, either on a short-term or a longer-term basis, in previous disasters. The usefulness and applicability of such waivers during a pandemic would be dependent on the scope of the outbreak and the limitations on person-to-person contact in any given area.

If there are questions or additional information is required please contact the school nutrition program specialist assigned to the division, or Lynne Fellin, acting director, at (804) 225-2074.